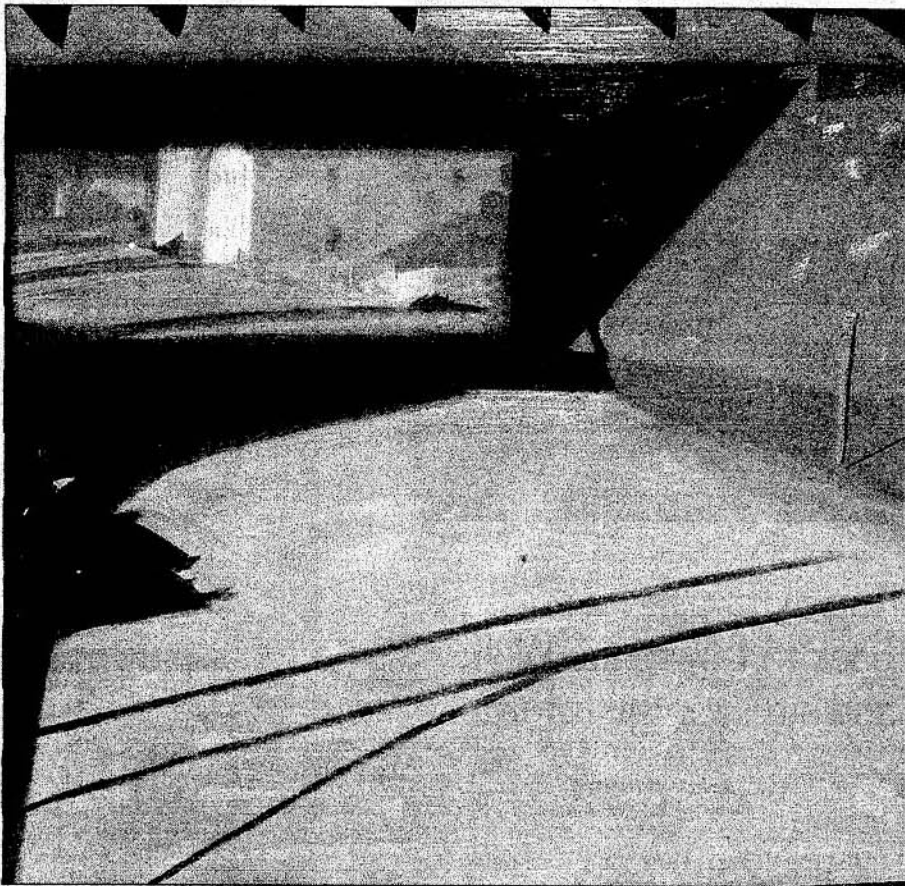


Art world loses bright light with death of Richard Sheehan

The world cannot afford to lose another good painter, but once again it has with the sudden death of Richard Sheehan earlier this month. He was 52.

Though Sheehan always lived, painted and taught in New England, his work got a warm reception whenever it showed in San Francisco. Like the so-called Bay Area Figuration of Richard Diebenkorn and Elmer Bischoff, Sheehan's pictures discover abstract formal values in



"Cumberland Bridge" (1990), an oil on canvas by Richard Sheehan, who died earlier this month at 52.

Kenneth Baker

Art Notes

views painted from observation.

Having started painting outdoors in midwinter to win a bet, Sheehan soon made a habit of studying firsthand the changing light and shadows around and under bridges. In such seemingly unpromising subjects, he found ample occasion for dramatic uses of color and for reflection on what it means to feel at home in the world.

"Latin American Posters": Mexican Museum curator Tere Romo has contributed a useful essay to a book soon to be published by the University of New Mexico Press: "Latin American Posters: Public Aesthetics and Mass Politics" edited by Russ Davidson (188 pages; \$50 hardcover; \$34.95 softcover).

Romo's essay discusses poster designs on Latin American and broader political themes by Chicano artists, focusing on Bay Area notables Rupert Garcia, Ester Hernandez and Malaquias Montoya. The book also includes contributions by David Craven, Teresa Eckmann and Ilan Stavans.

Poster art inspired by Latin American political events inherited in the latter half of the 20th century the formal and tactical resources that marked Soviet and European revolutionary propaganda in the early decades of the century. Latin American poster designers also exploited to great effect the explosion of an international popular culture after World War II.

"Latin American Posters" will accompany an exhibition of the Sam L. Slick Collection of Latin American and Iberian Posters set to

open on Sept. 9 at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque (through March 4). For those who cannot make it to Albuquerque, the book will serve as consolation and a permanently valuable reference source.

SFMOMA perk to students: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has received a six-figure grant from the James Family Foundation that will allow it to offer free admission to students of three Bay Area art schools.

Beginning Sept. 1, SFMOMA will be admission-free to students of California College of the Arts, the San Francisco Art Institute and the Academy of Art University. An invaluable gift to the culture at large when so many factors tend to

downgrade the distinction between confronting artworks directly and trying to skim impressions of them from reproductions.

The James Family Foundation, set up by Bay Area museum benefactors, is unconnected to another James Family Foundation, established by the mother of Cleveland Cavaliers basketball star LeBron James, which also happens to support education initiatives.

But speaking of Cleveland ...

The justly admired Cleveland Museum of Art has arranged with Starbucks to set up "Art Corners" in 10 of its northeast Ohio outlets.

Each one will display "selected posterized reprints" of famous works from the CMA's collections.

Starbucks will also host appear-

ances by CMA's Art Crew, who apparently enact famous paintings or re-pose them in costume.

To think that artists formerly suffered only the indignities of neglect or luckless reappraisal. Can coffee-drinkers now look forward to seeing Caravaggio's "Crucifixion of St. Andrew" or Manet's "Berthe Morisot" in tableaux form?

Will museums stop at nothing as they trawl for a mass audience? After re-enactments, what, a sitcom? We can only hope that the urgency of "audience development," as it's called, does not lead museums to forget that they serve as custodians of the seriousness of art, as well as of the things themselves.

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